

DISTANCE LEARNING

The incorporation of distance learning in the programme is deliberately designed to let you continue working whilst undertaking the MSc. Your course has five distance learning modules out of the eight that you will be required to complete to be awarded the full Masters degree (the Professional Report, which can be completed through distance learning, counts as a double module). You will, however, be required to attend at least two classroom or field-based modules from the following: Professional Skills (compulsory module, classroom-based) and one from Managing Cultural Heritage (classroom) or Responsible Tourism in Destinations (residential field trip).

Despite most modules being delivered in a distance learning format, they do incorporate an optional weekend of traditional face-to-face contact. Although these teaching weekends are optional, we strongly recommend attending them if at all possible because of the obvious benefits you will receive. In addition to the formal and informal learning experience, you will have the opportunity for one-to-one meetings with your tutors to help you to keep on track with your assignments and to exchange experiences with other students. We suggest that you also try to add time at either end of the weekend for library research.

For each distance learning module you will be sent an up-to-date manual of 150 to 200 pages which includes readings, tasks and links to further material. Much of the material consists of journal articles and reports that we provide to you in electronic format. In a few instances the readings refer to book chapters and older sources that for copyright reasons we cannot provide electronically; the sources will be in the Leeds Met library as well as the British Library, and we will suggest alternatives as well as indicating key text-books for you to buy. We provide bound copies of the manual and journals/reports as a CD/DVD, which most students will receive at the beginning of the module (otherwise you may access them online). We cannot guarantee posting to students in very remote locations with poor postal service, and strongly recommend you invest in a good internet connection if at all possible.

With distance learning at the core of our course design, there is an online portal for every module which has downloadable versions of the manual and readings for each of the units. The same portal is used to submit all assignments online: there are no paper submissions, reducing the financial and environmental cost of posting and the anxiety of wondering whether it has arrived on time. The portal is used for student and staff communication, group discussions and accessing uploaded streamed videos of guest lectures. The face-to-face modules with compulsory attendance have less online support as we expect more of the learning to be in class conditions, and for you to add library time to your Leeds visit.

Be warned: distance learning requires motivation and self-discipline, especially if you have a demanding professional life and / or a family. Studying will be enjoyable, but it will not be easy, or quick. We recommend that if you are thinking of taking this course you set yourself the target of choosing one of the reports in our Resource web-library every week (<http://www.icrtourism.org/weblibrary.asp>) and summarising it in one page. If you find that after three weeks you have not been able to do this, it is unlikely

that you will have the time or commitment to complete the course, and we suggest that you delay it until your professional and personal life permits you more time.

Once you have joined the course, you should set aside quality time for studying. We want you to enjoy learning about responsible tourism, rather than being rushed to do each assessment and never know the joy of learning.

We are proud of our library access for distance learners:

- We spend GBP70,000 a year on tourism, hospitality and events related books, journals and reports
- We are a UN World Tourism Organisation depository library
- We hold most Mintel and Keynote reports online, which should give you all you need for your studies
- We are increasingly moving to online access of WTO reports and e-books for the benefit of distance learners.
- You can borrow items for an extended loan period of 4 weeks, 5 books at a time (this is 4 weeks since we post them, not since you receive them!). Leeds Met pays to post these to you, while you need to pay the postage to send them back. You can renew books online. Photocopies of journal articles or book chapters cost £1 including postage
- You order and renew the books and journal articles through a dedicated online and telephone-based team
- This same team gives you online help on how to use electronic resources from our library, for instance doing online searches, setting usernames and passwords and retrieving data. As a registered student at Leeds Met you will be given access to Athens, which is a vast online library of academic journal articles. This means that you get to access most journal articles online via your Athens password, rather than having to order them (the system does not include older items or those that we do not subscribe to)
- Via an inter-university arrangement, you may also access and borrow from other UK university libraries nearer to you (see <http://www.access.sconul.ac.uk/>); how useful this is of course depends on the library's collection. Unfortunately we do not have a similar arrangement outside the UK
- When you visit Leeds for face-to-face elements of your course, such as for our intensive weekends, you can access our library and IT facilities 24 hours a day 7 days a week, maximising your time on campus to find those articles and books you could not get at a distance. It is therefore worthwhile reading the distance learning materials and drafting your assignments well before travelling for an intensive study period since you will be able to use the library for additional material. For the face-to-face modules, add some days to your visit to use the library as we do not post materials out and we cannot guarantee all you need is available online

Please note that this leaflet is provided for information purposes only. It is intended to give a broad overview of the course and it is not intended to be, and should not be treated as, a definitive statement of the course or facilities to be provided by the University. The University reserves the

right to make variations to the contents or methods of delivery, or to vary location from which a particular module may be provided, if such action is reasonably considered necessary by the University.